

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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June 17, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Honorable U. Alexis Johnson  
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

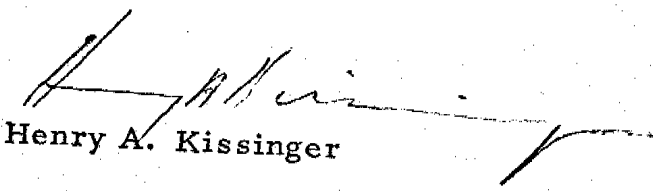
The Honorable David Packard  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer  
Acting Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

The Honorable Richard Helms  
Director, Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: The President's Views on Cambodia

The attached summary of the President's views on Cambodia, which he expressed at the June 15 WSAG meeting, is absolutely only for your personal use and should not be distributed elsewhere.

  
Henry A. Kissinger

Attachment

NSS/NSC Review Completed.

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Washington Special Actions Group Meeting  
with the President

Monday, June 15, 1970  
White House Situation Room

The President has directed that the following summary of his views on Cambodia as expressed to the June 15 WSAG meeting be circulated to all principals in that meeting on an "Eyes Only" basis. He wishes to underline his determination that we take a positive, imaginative approach to these problems.

Cambodia's Importance

-- It is our national policy to preserve the neutrality and integrity of Cambodia.

-- It is important for such countries as Indonesia, Thailand and Laos to know that we are standing firm; we must keep the psychological factor in mind.

-- The Cambodian situation is somewhat comparable to Laos in March, where our close decisions on air power and the [redacted] helped reverse the situation despite the contrary judgment of many.

25X1

-- We have already accomplished a great deal in Cambodia with our attacks on the Communist sanctuaries and supplies; we now have to ask what more Cambodia is worth to us and what we can afford to risk, keeping in mind that if Cambodia falls, we will in any event have to assume some of the responsibility.

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-- There is a two-fold advantage in keeping Cambodia independent: (1) to assure the goals of Vietnamization by denying use of Sihanoukville and the sanctuaries by the other side, and (2) to prevent a serious psychological impact if things went the other way.

-- Together with other countries we must shore up Cambodia psychologically and militarily; we must take whatever heat is necessary rather than being passive and fail through not trying.

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-- Everyone should take a confident line with the press and in backgrounders. The line that "Cambodia is doomed" must be stopped.

Arms Supply

-- The Cambodian army should receive arms to the extent that we could supply them, and we should have a greater sense of urgency; it is psychologically important to the Cambodians to know that we are helping.

-- Captured stocks should be moved on an urgent basis.

-- We should get the Indonesians involved, such as following up Suharto's suggestion of a modest program of their providing Soviet arms in return for modernization by us.

Intelligence

-- We need to know more of what is going on; our intelligence must be adequate since so much depends on our assessments.

-- It appears that the North Vietnamese are staging hit-and-run raids to create apprehension in Phnom Penh, but that they do not have too much muscle or staying power.

Third-Country Assistance

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-- He recognizes the legal problems [redacted] involvement, 25X1 but even opposition Senators recognize the principle of Asians helping Asians. It should be encouraged.

-- Our assistance to the South Vietnamese, Thai, Indonesians, etc., might be costly, but they need our economic help and psychologically the effect would be positive.

Diplomatic Action

-- The Djakarta Conference was one of the best things which had occurred recently, but there should be more attention paid to the Conference and the fact that 11 Asian nations had gathered to be of assistance.

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-- The diplomatic impact of this Conference might also restrain the North Vietnamese and Soviets, who in contrast to the Chinese may want an international conference on IndoChina.

-- There is a need for an international conference on Cambodia.

#### South Vietnamese Forces

-- While the first responsibility of the South Vietnamese forces is in South Vietnam, the situation there would be much more difficult if Cambodia were completely under Communist control.

-- Therefore, the South Vietnamese forces should be kept loose, both now and after June 30, to react to North Vietnamese actions in Cambodia.

-- Possible South Vietnamese actions are one of the main deterrents to North Vietnam; this deterrent effect must be maintained.

-- South Vietnamese forces should undertake offensive spoiling actions.

#### U.S. Air Activities

-- He believes it is understood what we would do between now and July 1, and that after July 1, we would continue our interdiction.

-- This interdiction should be interpreted broadly and it is very important that everybody in the Defense Department realizes this.

-- It is necessary to take some risks now regarding public opinion in order to see that Cambodia maintains its neutrality and independence.

#### Conclusion

-- We must think in positive terms, particularly on the military and supply fronts where we have been thinking too defensive.

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-- There must be a daily report on what we are doing concerning Cambodia in the diplomatic, intelligence, military and supply fields.

-- He will continue to watch developments closely in these fields.

-- It is worth taking risks.

-- Our objective is more to maintain a non-Communist, independent government rather than backing any particular government.

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